



MONTANA DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS

RESTORATIVE JUSTICE/VICTIM PROGRAMS

5 South Last Chance Gulch • Helena, MT 59601
P.O. Box 201301 • Helena, MT 59620-1301

Montana Department of Corrections Victim Services staff serve some of the most traumatized victims in the State of Montana for the longest period of time in the criminal justice system. MDOC initiated programs for victims in 1998.

The mission of Montana Department of Correction Victim Services is to inform, involve, educate and empower crime victims while enhancing community safety through positive collaboration.

VICTIM LIAISONS (5 positions):

- Serve an average of 700 victims per quarter
- Most victims are victims of domestic violence/stalking/harassment, assault, sexual assault/abuse and homicide survivors
- Most victims report being Caucasian
- Of the victims served last quarter, 346 reported being female and 78 reported being male (some chose not to participate is self-identifying demographics).
- The average age is between 25-59 years old

Highlights: During the quarter from July 1, 2019-September 30, 2019 (3-month period) some of the services the Victim Liaisons delivered are as follows:

- Provided information about the criminal justice system process 1,988 times
- Provided information about victim rights, how to receive notifications, etc. 741 times
- Referred to other victim services programs 1,321 times
- Provided individual advocacy 2,164 times
- Provided individual counseling 1,583 times
- Provided 1,615 notifications of criminal justice events
- Provided
- Assisted 447 victims with victim impact statements
- Provided 1,602 incidents of civil assistance and criminal advocacy/accompaniment

Montana Department of Corrections Victim Services implements person-centered, trauma-informed strategies to assist victims of crime who have experienced traumatic events. MDOC recognizes ongoing interaction with the criminal justice system, including events while the offender is under the supervision of MTDOC, can retrigger trauma.

- Trauma informed victim support
- Provide valuable information about the criminal justice process
- Victim Notifications
- Information and referral to local services
- Assist in development of Victim Impact Statements
- Collect and Rout Victim Impact Statements and Pecuniary Loss Affidavit's /DOC Victim Impact Guide for Children
- Pecuniary Loss Affidavit Form
- Provide Victim/Witness Advocacy
- Court Attendance
- Crime Victim Compensation assistance
- Safety Planning
- Address unwanted contact from offender
- Accompaniment to BOPP
- Information regarding the offender's parole release and supervision
- Referrals to resources for specialized services
- Training, education and public awareness
- Assistance with Orders of Protection, Parenting Plans and other civil legal paperwork



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- Develop collaborative partnerships with victims, victim advocates, criminal justice agencies, community-based organizations and other community members
- Promote Victim Restorative Justice Opportunities
- Victim Offender Dialogue
- Victim Impact Panel
- Offender Accountability Letter Bank

HEALING PROGRAMS OFFERED:

NOTIFICATION via Victim Liaisons and VINE

Victim Offender Dialogue: Victim driven. Both the victim and offender must be willing participants. Information is not provided to the Parole Board, so it has no impact on parole. Healing opportunity that takes 6 months to two years of preparation.

Victim Impact: Listen & Learn-Panelists: Victim volunteers travel to tell their stories about the ripple effect on the crime in their lives to 13 different locations. The BOPP Board asks offenders during parole hearings to identify the most impactful programming they have attended. Victim Impact is #1 response.

Accountability Letter Program: Not the same as an apology letter required by the Court. Very stringent guidelines. If Victim Services has the victim's address, we notify the victim a letter is available to them. The victim chooses if they receive the letter, or not.

FGTM: Used seldom. 6 FGTM in the past 2 years. Used when there is no condition in the Judgment limiting or forbidding contact in cases that are high risk and it is necessary to mitigate the risk when there are no barriers to contact or the victim and offender residing together. Evidence based. Practiced in 22 countries throughout the world. Practiced in every state of the US in one venue or another and in Canada.

Victim Wrap Around Meeting: Includes victim's support network, P&P Officer, local advocacy agency if requested by the victim, local County Attorney's Office if victim requests, local law enforcement with victim approval, Child and Family Services with victim approval, Victim Liaison and other community stakeholders as requested by victim.

MDOC VS Principles of Trauma Informed Care

- Awareness: Everyone knows the role of trauma
- Safety: Ensuring physical and emotional safety
- Trustworthiness: Maximizing trustworthiness, making tasks clear, and maintaining appropriate boundaries
- Choice: Respect and prioritize victim choice and control
- Empowerment: Prioritizing victim empowerment and skill-building
- **Collaboration:** Maximizing collaboration and sharing of options and resources with victims and other criminal justice stakeholders-**Keeping communities safe and victims supported in our communities cannot happen without the ability to collaborate together.**